From Plantation to White House 01:512:268  (4 credits)
Prof. Deborah White and Prof. Donna Murch, History

The day Barack Obama won the U.S. presidential election, November 4, 2008, is certainly among the most significant historical moments of your life time. But, history is not made in a moment. How did a people who were, just such a short time ago, on the margins of citizenship move to the center of political power in a land where their color and ascribed status marked them as outsiders? Has racism disappeared? When and how did it begin in America; how was it sustained; and what groups have been its victim?

Michelle Obama’s heritage takes us from American slave plantations to the White House, raising questions about the intersecting histories of slavery, race, women and gender in America. Barack Obama’s interracial and international heritage prompts us to ask: “who is black in America?” Can someone choose to be black or is blackness thrust upon one? What does it mean to be brown in America today? Can a person choose their race?

By exploring America’s legal and social history to answer these questions, From Plantation to White House challenges you to rethink American history while preparing you to address contemporary issues of profiling, neo-liberal and neo-conservative politics, immigration, racial identity, and gender in the 21st century.

This course is particularly recommended for students who intend to pursue majors or minors in history, Africana studies, American studies, business, criminal justice, journalism and media studies, labor studies, political science, public policy, social justice area studies, sociology, women’s and gender studies, area studies, and studies of race and ethnicity. This course carries credit toward the major and minor in American history. This course carries credit toward the major and minor in History. It can be used to fulfill the SAS interdisciplinary and diversity requirements.

POLITICS AND SOCIAL POLICY: LESSONS FROM EUROPE  (3 credits)  01:360/790:290
Prof. Dan Kelemen, European Studies and Political Science

Welcome to citizenship in the 21st Century! You’re inheriting an unaffordable healthcare system that leaves millions uninsured, a mounting climate crisis, failing schools, a fractured social safety net, an aging population, high unemployment and growing deficits. What can we learn from studying the approaches to these problems taken by the economically advanced democracies of the European Union?

On the Left, many believe Europe offers successful models of how to balance capitalism and the pursuit of economic growth with a greater commitment to social justice and sustainable development. On the Right, by contrast, many warn of the dangers of importing these ideas, arguing that European social democracies suffer under high taxes, excessive state control of the economy and economic stagnation. What’s fact and what’s fiction? And, what are the lessons for the US in the 21st Century?

It is particularly recommended for students who intend to pursue majors or minors in European studies, political science, public policy, business, economics, education, European languages and literatures, geography, journalism and media studies, life sciences, social justice, sociology, and women and gender studies. The course carries credit towards the major or minor in Political Science and European Studies. It can be used to fulfill the SAS social science or interdisciplinary requirement and the global awareness requirement.

SEA CHANGE: THE RISE AND FALL OF SEA LEVEL AND THE JERSEY SHORE, 01:460:110  (3 credits)
Prof. Kenneth Miller, Earth and Planetary Sciences

What do wooly mammoths and the Jersey shore have in common? How long until your dorm room has an ocean view? Why is sea-level rising? Is it our fault? Can we stop it? Should we? What are the economic, ethical, and political realities of dealing with rising sea level?

Viewing modern sea-level and climate change through a 100 million year geological perspective, in this course you will reconstruct sea-level changes using different geological methods and try to predict the future, the impact on the Jersey shore, and our options to fight back.

Designed not just for the environmentally conscious, but also for skeptics and those simply curious about where we have been and where we are going, this course employ basic science concepts and builds the scientific literacy non-specialists need for confronting the economic, ethical, and political challenges of sea change in the 21st century. Leave your preconceived notions behind!
Sea Change is particularly recommended for students pursuing majors or minors in the social sciences and in areas of the humanities impacted by changing sea levels, such as anthropology, art history, business, classics, economics, European studies, history, human ecology, journalism and media studies, Latino and Hispanic Caribbean studies, political science, public policy, and sociology. It is of interest to students in the physical and biological sciences. It can be used to fulfill the SAS natural science, interdisciplinary and global awareness requirements.

WAR: CRITICAL PERSPECTIVES 01:988:270 (3 credits)
Professor Ethel Brooks, Departments of Women’s and Gender Studies & Sociology
Has the “war on terror” affected your life? In the absence of military conscription, do U.S. military operations in Afghanistan, Iraq, Somalia, or Guantanamo influence everyday life within the United States? How are we to make sense of Humvees on the highway or camouflage gear as a fashion trend? Are there connections between genocide and gang membership, or between war and particular modes of labor and production, or between military bases and sexual violence? Does “homeland security” make you more or less secure?

This course contrasts dominant accounts of war developed by international relations scholars with analyses of the raced and gendered aspects and consequences of war for both domestic and foreign policies. It considers the displacement, migration, refugee experiences, nation-building, changing labor regimes, production practices, and rights regimes.

This course is particularly recommended for students pursuing majors or minors in women’s and gender studies, sociology, area studies and studies of race and ethnicity, colonial and postcolonial studies, criminal justice, geography, history, journalism and media studies, Middle Eastern studies, political science/international relations, psychology, and social justice. This course carries credit toward the major and minor in Women’s and Gender Studies. It can be used to fulfill the SAS interdisciplinary, diversity, or global awareness requirements. Honors section available for SASHP students.

GLOBAL EAST ASIA 01:098/214:245 (3 credits)
Prof. Paul Schalow, Asian Languages and Cultures
It touches your life every day, yet how much do you really know about East Asia -- home to three of today’s most powerful nations and over a fifth of the world’s population?

China, Korea, and Japan are major economic, political, and cultural players in an increasingly global 21st century. At the same time, within East Asia the push for globalization is being met with an equally powerful pushback of nationalism and regionalism. How do social, cultural, and political narratives that posit enduring patterns influence the future of the East Asian peoples? How have national memories of wartime traumas such as colonization, massacre, and bombing been constructed and used in modern East Asia? How are the global and regional dynamics in East Asia and the interrelated issues of modernity, war, gender, and the geopolitical balance of power shaping events as they unfold in the 21st century?

This course is particularly recommended for students who intend to pursue majors or minors in the various Asian languages and area studies, anthropology, business, economics, geography, history, journalism and media studies, political science, public policy, religion, sociology, and women’s and gender studies. It carries credit toward the major and minor in Asian Studies and Asian Languages and Area Studies. It can be used to fulfill the SAS writing intensive, interdisciplinary, and the diversity or global awareness requirements. (credit not given for this course and 098/214:242)

EATING RIGHT: THE ETHICS OF FOOD CHOICES AND FOOD POLICY, 01:730:252 (4 credits) Prof. Andy Egan, Philosophy
Thought much about food lately?

What are the environmental and social consequences of various eating habits? What moral obligations, if any, do we have toward non-human animals? Do the answers to these questions generate moral obligations to adopt (or to abandon) particular eating habits? How are our individual and societal decisions about what to eat expressive of aesthetic, moral, cultural, and religious values?

What’s the moral (and policy) significance of particular cultural culinary traditions, and of the importance of cultural group membership to individual well-being? What choices should we as individuals make and what actions should we as a society take to influence how our food is grown, processed, marketed, sold, and consumed?

This course is particularly recommended for students who intend to pursue majors or minors in the various area studies, anthropology, business, history, life sciences, philosophy, political science, public policy, religion, social justice, and sociology. The course carries credit towards the major or minor in Philosophy. It can be used to fulfill the SAS humanities and diversity requirements.

SAS Signature Courses are foundational courses engaging topics of grand intellectual sweep and enduring importance. They are designed and taught by our renowned scholars and scientists who are not only recognized for their specialized research but are also eloquent and demanding award-winning teachers. Each course is made up of a combination of capacious lectures by faculty and small discussion sections lead by graduate students from our nationally-ranked graduate programs. They establish a common basis for intellectual exchange and define us as the SAS community of students and scholars working together. Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey.